15

Geevarghese Chediath

Mar Babai the Great
Some Useful Counsels on the Ascetical Life

Kottayam
2001

ܟܬܒ ܚܙ

ܒܝܬ ܡܪܕܘܬܐ ܕ ܡܪܝ ܐܠܦܐ ܒܝܬ ܡܢ

Ex Libris

Beth Mardutho Library

The Malphono George Anton Kiraz Collection

ܠܐ ܐܢܐ ܒܥܐ ܕܟܬܒܐ ܗܢ ܡܢ ܚܒܪ ܐܢ
ܐ ܒܥܐ ܒܥ ܒܥ ܒܥ ܒܥ ܒܥ ܒܥ
ܒܥ ܡܢ ܚܒ ܒܟܬܒܐ ܒܥ ܠܐ ܐ
ܚܒ ܕ ܒܥ ܠܐ ܒܥ ܕ ܒܥ ܚܒ
ܒܥ ܒܥ ܕ ܒܥ ܒܥ ܒܥ ܒ

Anyone who asks for this volume, to read, collate, or copy from it, and who appropriates it to himself or herself, or cuts anything out of it, should realize that (s)he will have to give answer before God's awesome tribunal as if (s)he had robbed a sanctuary. Let such a person be held anathema and receive no forgiveness until the book is returned. So be it, Amen! And anyone who removes these anathemas, digitally or otherwise, shall himself receive them in double.

Geevarghese Chediath

Mar Babai the Great
ome Useful Counsels on the Ascetical Life

St.Ephrem Ecumenical Research Institute(SEERI)
Baker Hill, Kottayam-686001, Kerala, India.
2001

G.Chediath(tr.), Mar Babai the Great-Some Useful Counsels on the Ascetical Life,
A Publication of St. Ephrem Ecumenical Research Institute(SEERI), Baker Hill, Kottayam-686 001, Kerala, India.

© G.Chediath,2001.

Type Setting and Printing:WiGi Printers,
Manganam P.O., Kottayam 686018.

CONTENTS

Preface 4

Introduction 5

The First Treatise (Memra I) 12

The Second Treatise (Memra II) 27

The Third Treatise(Memra III) 47

The Fourth Treatise (Memra IV) 59

PREFACE

Here we are publishing for the first time in English translation one of the ascetical works of Mar Babai the Great(553-628), namely *Some Useful Counsels on the Ascetical Life*. Mar Babai belonged to the Church of the East. He was the third Abbot of the Great Monastery of Izla, (604-628) in today's South-Eastern Turkey.In the absence of the Catholicos of the Church of the East in the Persian Empire, Mar Babai was the visitor of the monasteries of the Northern parts of the Persian Empire (608-628). He is known for his major Christological work, *the Book of Union.*

As an Abbot Mar Babai was very closely connected with the Persian monastic establishment. He wrote a few ascetico-mystical works: 1. The Commentary on the Centuries of Evagrius Ponticus. 2. The Commentary on the Spiritual Law of Abba Marcos. 3. Canons for the Monks. 4. Some Useful Counsels on the Ascetical Life. 5. An Explanation on the Letter(s) of John Hazzaia. 6. An Ascetical work for the Novices. Among these six monastic works four have come down to us (1-4); two of them are already in printed form(1.3) and the two others are not yet published(2.4)and two have not come down to us(5.6).

In the publication of this work, I am indebted to Fr. Placid J. Podipara of blessed memory(+1985)and Prof. George Nedungatt, S.J.,(Rome), for their valuable help in the translation and correction of the ms. I am also thankful to Dr. Jacob Thekkeparambil, the Director of Seeri for kindly accepting it to be published in one of the series of his publications. Recently I translated into Malayalam the *Liber de Unione* of Mar Babai the Great and it is published under Seeri's *Nuhro Series(4)*. May I thank also the WiGi Printers and all those who collaborated with the printing and publishing of this work.

Geevarghese Chediath

Malankara Major Seminary,
Nalanchira,Trivandrum.
29th May,2001.

Some Useful Counsels on the Ascetical Life by Mar Babai the Great

Introduction

Mar Babai the Great (551/3-628), the third Abbot of the Great Monastery of Mount Izla in today's Eastern Turkey (604-628), and the visitor of some of the monasteries in the Northern part of the Persian Empire (608-628), wrote more than 80 treatises.[1] According to the *Chronicle of Seert*, one of his works is, *the Book on Certain Monastico-Ascetical Questions.*[2] **Ms.Vat.Syr.592, fol. 8v-26v** is a Monastico-ascetical work, bearing the name of Mar Babai.[3] This ms. was copied in 1918 by a certain Mathew in Mosul from a ms. of 1660, containing writings of different authors such as Isaac of Nineveh (fols.1v-8v), Babai the Great (8v-26v), Babai of Nisibis (26v-40v), Joseph Hazzaya (96v-138r), John Penkaye (153r-222v) and some other theological works (41r-92v; 140r-152r).[4]

This monastico-ascetical work of Babai is called **"Some Useful**

---

1. Abdiso, Catalogus Librorum, in J. S. Assemani, Bibliotheca Orientalis,III,1. p. 94; Thomas of Marga, Historia Monastica, ch.2: vol.2, p. 93; G. Chediath, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, Kottayam, 1982.
2. *Histoire Nestorienne*, in **Patrologia Orientalis**,13,4,Paris, 1918, p.534.
3. In fol.8v. 13r. 19r.22v. and 26v the name of Babai appears.
4. A van Lantschoot, *Inventaire des Manuscrits Syriaques des Fonds Vatican* (490-631) *Barberini Orientali Neofiti*, Citta del Vaticano, **(Studi e Testi 243)**, 1965,p. 119-121.

Counsels on the Ascetical life". It is divided into four treatises *(memre)* of unequal length. The first two are longer than the last two. From the ms. it seems that the document is not complete as it appears in the present form.[5] The *Parsopic Christology*, characteristic of Mar Babai the Great appears in one place(fol.13r) where one finds four comparisons between the Word of God and Satan. On fol.20v there is a statement against the Theopaschites, without naming them. The ms. is written in West Syriac letters, but with the East Syriac punctuation. A.Voobus has listed three other mss. of the same work: Ms.Bagd.6033,fol.14v-49r; Ms.Alqosh 247,cah. 2. fol. 10b-cah. 6,fol.4a; Ms. Sharf. Patr. 80, fol. 33a-53a.[6]

General Remarks

This monastic document contains maxims or sayings on ascetical themes written by Mar Babai. They are the result of spiritual reflection, deep meditation and prayer. They are not arranged thematically. The same topics appear again and again. The maxims were given to the ascetics and not to the ordinary Christians. They deal with a variety of topics of monastic interest: Perfection is flight from the world and forsaking of the world; it is flight from sin; it is fight against the body and controlling of emotions; it is a warfare: against one's own body and its evil inclinations, against Satan and evil. It is a constant struggle. It is a life of mortification and silence. Mortification involves all kinds of abstentions: from laughter, women and so on. It involves chaste behavior. Forsaking of the world demands loving Christ wholeheartedly, and hoping for the unseen realities of future, trusting in Christ and setting on His path *(Memra I)*. The monk should

---

5. Cfr,fol.21v.
6. A.Voobus, History of the School of Nisibis, Louvain,1965 **(CSCO 266/Subsidia 26)**, p. 291. n. 17.

fly to the mountain and follow the footsteps of Christ. The solitary life is a continuous life of repentance and mortification.

Monastic life demands constant endeavor for perfection, love of solitude and quietness, binding oneself in asceticism, despising the body and love for humiliations, control of thought, guarding of feelings and conquering the inclinations. The monk should be humble and austere, loving solitude and solitaries, receiving holy men, doing good to others, and cultivating sanctity in words, deeds and thought. He should pray for the benefactors, share the goods with others, forgive the trespasses of others; he should be frugal in food, modest in everything, not listening to useless talks and be chaste. He should keep the tranquility of body and mind; he tries to please God; he keeps the body in purity and the soul in sanctity. He avoids vainglory, flees from wickedness, keeps justice and fears judgment *(Memra I).*

Christology

There are only very few random Christological refere- nces in the treatise. Jesus Christ is described as "our hope and our God"*(Memra 4, 26v).* The *Parsopic Christology* appears in one place *(Memra 2,13r).* There, one finds four comparisons between the Word of God and Satan. Word of God put on our humanity or the man Jesus. The union of the Word with the flesh is a *putting on unitedly.* In the first parallel, Babai uses a concrete expression, "the sweet man Jesus", while in the second, he changes it to "His humanity". He uses *concrete and abstract expressions interchangeably.* The expression, "putting on the sweet man Jesus" does not mean here an ontologically independent man existing with the Word of God. The *putting on* was meant for the manifestation of the Word of God: "through him He spoke Life". It is through the resurrection of Christ's humanity from the dead that He

gives us the pledge of immortality and incorrupt-ibility. Christ's humanity is the first fruit of the redemption. Those who adore him will enter into Paradise with Him and it is through Christ's humanity that we are enabled to return to Paradise. In the third and fourth comparisons there is a reference to the humanity and divinity of Christ: "Christ is good in His humanity and good in His divinity". The reference is to Christ as *one Person in two natures*. Except the very divine nature, which cannot be imparted to the creatures, God the Word gave everything to His humanity. This is done through *the Parsopa of Filiation (parsopa dabruta).* The properties of the natures are preserved in each nature, but the union took place in the Parsopa. This union is *for ever (wal alam),* i.e., once united, the union is never broken. According to Babai, this is the correct faith: "A man of God is known from the truth of his faith" *(Memra 2,13r).* In one place there is an anti-Theopaschite formula *(Memra 3,20v).* This may be in reference to the increased influence of the Severians in Persia and Egypt and the change of the Trisagion into a Christological prayer. Then follows a Christological prayer *(Memra 3,20v).*

Monks and Women

Mar Babai presents women to the monks as an object to be avoided at all costs, always and everywhere (Memra 1, 9v-10r. 10v.11r; 2,14v.15v.17r; 3, and 19v.20v; 4, 21v.25r-25v). This attitude is quite understandable in his monastic context. Thomas of Marga in his *Book of Governors*(vol.2,p.50ff.) presents a peculiar custom in Persia. Attached to the Great Monastery of Izla at the time of Mar Babai, there lived solitaries. At a certain period, it was found out that some of these solitaries had women and children living with them. Instigated by a certain Elijah, a monk of Arab origin, Babai and others expelled such monks together with their wives

and children from the monastery and burned their habitation. Babai, however, was not totally a misogynist, is clear from his reference to Susanna and other virtuous women.

Attitude to Heretics

At the time of Mar Babai, there were various kinds of "heretics" in Persia. The main "heretics" of the monastic circles were the Messalians, the Severians, and the Henanians. In the present document, Babai does not mention them by name. But it is clear from other sources that he is referring to them. Babai was appointed visitor of the monasteries of the northern part of Persia by the bishops. It was meant to counteract the activities of the Messalians. According to Babai, the heretics are to be avoided. There should not be any dealing with them (Memra 2,14v.15v.16r; 3,20r).

A good Teacher

He exhorts the monks to follow only a good teacher, because a false teacher can do a lot of harm. A good teacher practices what he teaches. Wicked teachers corrupt the disciples. Hence a selection of the teacher must be preceded by a close watch of his behavior. The teacher should not be a proud man, he should have order within himself, he should not be a town dweller, and one who changes his views. He must also teach orderly behavior and correct faith. Babai may have Henana in mind. Henana and his followers had for some time very strong influence in the Persian Church (Memra I.II.2.23v.24r).

Control of body and mind

Great emphasis is given to the control of bodily emotions and passions. Bodily emotions are constantly at war against the monk. So struggle against the body is the work of asceticism. He asks the monks to keep the tranquility of

body and soul. It is necessary to subdue the passion. Turning the mind away from them and having recourse to prayer, reading of the Scriptures and of the Fathers are effective remedies.

Prayer

Prayer constitutes the major activity of the monk. Babai speaks of midnight prayer. He cites the example of Peter in prison and the church praying for him. Prayer should be preceded by a moment of recollection. Prayer must be offered for others, especially for those who despise you. We should have confidence in prayer and for that the necessary condition is to be away from sin. Faith and good works accompany prayer. Prayer must be accompanied by chaste behavior. and it must be offered with great care. One must be constant in his prayer *(Memra I,8v; III,22r.III,25r).*

Imageries

Babai makes use of a lot of biblical and non-biblical imageries. He was a keen observer of men and nature. He refers to Mary Magdalene, entering the tomb of Christ and angels seen there; Christ appearing to the Apostles in the closed room; Elisa giving life to the dead(2,13v); presentation of Canaan and Ruben(2,16r); Nebuchadnesser (2,18r); Israel adoring Baal-Peor at Midian, Moses on the top of the Mountain, Elijah on Mount Carmel and bringing fire, Christ defeating Satan, multiplying bread, and strengthened by an angel-all in the wilderness(3,20v); Judas and his fall (3, 20v;4,24r); Peter in Prison (3,22r); Samson (4,22r.25r-25v); Noah, Lot, David, and Beth Sheba, Joseph and Susanna. (4,25r-25v). He speaks of flying to the mountain for perfection (1,9r), traveling in the forest and losing the way (1,9r) and the cold on the way(1,10r). He uses the imagery of field, cultivation and seed (1,10v; 4,24v; 3, 20r; 4, 23r.23v), sheep

(1,10v; 3,19v .21v. 23v; 4, 25v), battle, crown, victory (1,12r-12v; 4,25r), soldiers' arms and dress(2,13r), ship (2,14v; 3, 20r; 4, 22v), Sun (2,15r; 3,19v), shadow following the body (2,17v), conception and child birth (2,18v.19r; 3,21v), marriage and becoming one flesh (2,18v), thieves (3,19v), fire and water(3,19v),dog(3,19v;4,25v), pearl and fire(3,19v), swimming (3,19v), serpent (3,19v; 4,23v. 24r-24v; 3, 21v;4,25r), burning charcoal (3,19v), scorpion (3,21v.4,24v), adulteress (3,21v), darkness-light (3,21v), water falling on the grinding stone (3,21v), ox and yoke (3,21v), iron on grinding stone (3,21v-22r), king and purple(4,23v), bird Ukbara (4,23v), iron and rust (4,23v), lepers and beggars (4,24v), hard rock (4,24v), pig-dirt (4,24v.25v), honey (4,25r), lion (4,25r), angry king (4,25r), stags, mares, and rabbits (4,25v)

Ms. Vat.Syr.592,fols.8v-26v.

(Fol.8v): And now, God helping, I am going to set down *Some Useful Counsels on the Ascetical Life and on the Knowledge of Truth,* composed by St. Mar Babai the Great. Our Lord, help me in your mercy. Amen.

The First Treatise (Memra I)

Pray for all thoughts that are roused in you
and be not late.
Recollect in the beginning for a while and then pray.

If you do anything that is conformable to perfection,
give thanks.
If you cannot suffer those who despise you,
multiply your prayers.

If you forsake this world for the next,
(9r) make your testament.

If you love Christ with your whole heart,
do away with all that will keep you back from loving him.

If you believe that there is hope in the unseen realities,
fly to the mountains.
If you trust in Christ, love renunciation for Christ's sake.
If you set out on His way, keep to His footsteps.

Do not travel in the forest, lest you should be lost in it.
Enquire well and then begin.
Investigate into those things of which you are ignorant.
Then you will learn well.

If you are not against Christ, you will not be impeded.
If you work according to your strength,
he will make you wise.

Do not put your trust in men,
lest you should be deprived of grace.
Put your trust in our Lord,
that you may be strong against all fear.

Think of the judgment and flee from evil.
Remember the punishment and hate sin.

Love repentance, that you may be bright with light.
Regulate your temporal life
that you will rejoice in the bridal chamber.

Work with vigilance for perfection
and your consolation will increase.
Love quietness with patience, that you may gain peace of mind.
Bind yourself in asceticism, that your heart may be enlarged.

Despise your body that your soul may rejoice.
Love contempt for the sake of Jesus,
that he may exalt you in front of many.

Love to be insulted, that you may be honored forever.
Show your humility in deed,
that He may exalt you above many.
You may not even think of it.

If evil emotions are roused in you, turn your mind away.

If you are among many,
be with the One that you may be one.
If you are alone, avoid many that you may rest in One.

If many ask you, be silent.
If one alone is asking, give the answer wisely.
If he keeps on asking,
keep on giving the same answers until he becomes quiet.

Do not ask anything of any body,
except of the one who is wise in your way.
Do not ask him because you have heard of him.
But because you have tested him
that he is a believer in God.

Keep away from the young man who thinks he is holy.
Adhere to an old man who has hidden his perfections.

The old man who is old in his behavior
but is not known among men,
is the right person for the chaste.

Do not despise anyone from rumor,
nor honor anyone for his appearance.
For he who comes forward **(9v)**
and shows himself externally serves his passions.

He who is entangled in jealousy lives in calumny.
He who is desirous of praise begins to praise others.
He who loves ornaments is the slave of all passions.
He who is dressed in high tailored garments
is the abode of devils.
He who fills his stomach everyday
has to combat with himself every hour.
He who laughs often is far from repentance.
He who is obstinate is held in pride.
He who mocks his neighbor is full of pride.
He who parades his righteousness has no hope.
He who flies from praise will have hope dawned on him.

He who is zealous for truth loves truth.
He who covers up truth with adulation is the slave of Satan.
He who is siding with everyone is the slave of many.
He who is with the One lives with the One.

Love justice with alms of perfection,
that you may be worthy of mercy at the time of your need.
Do good to those who do you evil,
that you may be a teacher and a creditor.

Love and be merciful according to your strength,
that you may be rewarded beyond your strength.

Love those who empty themselves willingly.
Flee from those who gather wealth for tomorrow.
Endure the sufferings of the day
and hope for its counterpart,
because just rewards are in reserve.

If you are dead in your opinion,
you will have no worldly friends.
If you have put away the outward guise of the world,
put away also its pleasures.
If you have forsaken your bodily brethren for Jesus,
do not be friendly with worldly men either.
If you have emptied yourselves of your possessions
because of the Lord,
flee from them.
If you have loved sanctity, keep your eyes from seeing.

If a woman comes upon you by chance
and you are moved by her beauty,
swiftly flee to seclusion and you will be in rest.

Do not speak at all among women nor listen to them if possible.

Take care of your modesty in their spiritual love,
lest immodesty should overtake you and make you fall.
Control your emotions while meeting them.
Keep your tongue and your eyes,
that you may not be cast away.
Look at her temperament and not at her appearance.
Heed her behavior and not her perfumes.

Beware of her weeping more (10r) than of her laughter.
Hold in your hands iron, burning with fire.
Let not your limbs be inclined towards the body of a woman.
If she meets you on the way and asks you questions,
low your head and swiftly pass on.
If she asks you from where you come and what your news are,
tell her, "I do not know".
And to all women who want to speak with you,
answer only this, "I do not know."
If she approaches you, run away.
If she persists with you, persist to go away
and get angry with her.
Do not receive anything from her hands,
lest the desire of her should burn in you
and you be overtaken and fallen by her.

If cold oppresses you on the way, bear it in good spirit
and you shall not spend the night inside a hotel.
And you will see the glory of God.
And you will be numbered among the martyrs of ice.
If you are on the way of perfection with many,
and they have gone astray from the path of justice
remain as a sick man and do not proceed.
Remain alone, rather than mingle with many
who respect not your intention.

If a man hates you and becomes hard hearted against you,
because you keep yourself from wickedness,
you are free in the truth of the saints of the Lord.

Cultivate your thoughts in solitude
and guard your feelings against external forces.
And then you will become a faithful servant of Christ
and inherit happiness.

Fight against yourself and conquer your inclinations.
Put up with your struggles against devils and sins.
And behold you will become a faithful servant of Christ
and reign with him.
You shall not have any enemies except devil and sin.
You shall not have friends except Christ and his adorers.
Do not be a servant of many,
lest you should become a slave of many.
Let not your thought be separated from your intentions,
lest grace should disregard you,
and you fall among the waves of this world
unto your perdition.

Keep yourself away from the lovers of this world,
lest they should agitate, corrupt
and trample on you for their purpose.

Do not teach a woman,
lest you should become her disciple.
Do not learn from a woman,
lest she should make you a disciple of Satan.

Flee from an old and honest woman,
lest you should find her as a lascivious child
unto your perdition.

(10v) If a woman meets you and
lasciviously looks at you and laughs,
know that the devil is not far from her at that moment.
Hasten and bend your left hand from sin without delay.
Hasten and extend your right hand in almsgiving
to the needy.

He, who has once given over his life to Christ,
has peace of mind.
When you keep His commandments in justice,
then it will be known that your hope is in Christ.

If you arm yourself beforehand with the weapon of humility of thought, you will be terrible to the devils and will be a proved disciple of Christ.

If even in small things you are held by the love of glory, you are a rider who is already subjugated by the evil spirits.

Purify yourself from thorns and tares of sin, that you may be a blessed field of Christ. Grow the seed, which you have received from Him by the rain of His doctrine, that He may make you enter with Him into the storehouse of the blessed life. Do not mix His good seed with the tares of Egypt, lest you should become the tool of Satan.

Walk always in the way of the sheep
and beware of the way of the corrupting devils.

What you are not convinced of as protecting your life,
ask about it to the one who loves Christ.

Do not take counsel from one, who is held in the passion of pride, lest he should remove you from your righteousness and deride you.

If one comes forward to teach you, while he has no commission from any one, and whom you have not asked, know that this one is proud and his ways are wicked.

He who learns from city dwellers about spiritual behavior and takes counsel from them, resembles him who asks the adulteress about morality and sanctity.

He who seeks to learn chaste behavior from a teacher of words resembles him who seeks to learn warfare and the modes of war from one who is a smith or tailor.

Know that he, whom you see as following women,
is a corrupter and adulterer and is without hope.

If you want to learn easily about the sanctity of a man of God, know from these that he loves righteousness, and holds fast to truth and is humble in his thought.

Do not think that **(11r)** the one who has dealings and friendship with heretics, is a believer in Christ. He, whose words are contrary to this, is dead to true faith.

Know that he, who teaches you one thing about faith and changes what he taught you with another, has his heart and behavior of the devil, and his behavior wicked and corrupted.

He who, loved you and honored you in the behavior of sin, while you were in the world, but now turns his face from you, because you are converted and are an anchorite, certainly his hope is cut off from true life and he is a proved disciple of Satan.

He who loves God is known from this:
He honors and respects the saints of God.

The disciple of Satan is known by this:
He is far away from the company of saints

and greatly calumniates them
at every hour before everyone.

Love the solitary old man, humble and ascetic.
Flee from the fasting young man,
who wanders among men.

Bend your body before the saints of God,
that you may be a partaker in the circle of their prayers.

Receive the holy one in the name of the Holy One
as long as you know him well,
that you may receive the reward
of your knowledge and of your ignorance.

In all your behavior, do well to all, especially to those who are in need, for the sake of God, in those things in which you are capable of doing.

Not only in deed is sanctity cultivated,
but also in words and thoughts which are feeble.

Love modest women
who are diligent in attaining perfection,
while they are far way from you.
If in your thinking of their perfection, Satan enters,
how much more in the immodest eyes.

Do not believe a holy woman, except her who is seen as your mother and your sister in your thought, in everything towards you.

If you have a friend and you hear about him from trustworthy men, that he is one who deals with women, remove your eyes from him, lest he should make you impure by the narrations about them.

Rejoice when you are in want because of God,

more than in your riches which are because of God.

Love humiliation which is of a religious character,
more than honor, which is of religion.

Endure mockery and insult that are because of Christ,
more than honor and praise
which are because of **(11v)** Christ.

Love those who love you because of Christ,
more than your life,
so that you may be honored in both the worlds.

Pray for him who will satisfy your needs because of the love of Christ with a burning heart, so that you may become rich in both the worlds and your hope may increase.

Share with holy people who are your friends and with the hungry that are suffering, the blessings, which God has sent to you, that you may, by this, resemble Him who has made you share in His blessing and that you may receive the reward.

Love ill treatment because of God,
more than consolations that are because of God.

Accept with gladness the enmity of those who hate you because of your truth and with hearty thanks, which have much reward, more than the love of those who love and honor you because of your truth.

To be rid of possessions is not a great thing.
But it is much more praiseworthy to get rid of passions.

It is good to teach a man perfection, if he wills to put into action each and everything, which it demands. Little things that are done with the intention of perfection are valuable

to those who do them, rather than great things that are done for human praise.

That which you do for God's sake
is perfection and your helper.

Give help in small things
and you will be able in great things.
Forgive for God's sake and you will find God.

Conquer the proud by your humility
and the quarrelsome by your asceticism.
At every hour learn the different kinds of humility in Christ, that you may become a lofty teacher in Christ.

Do not love abundance,
that you may not lose precious things.
If you love to be in need,
you will not be in need and will be free.
He who loves the passing riches,
will be afflicted in both the worlds.

Be frugal in eating and long for spiritual learning.
Be modest in desires and active in toil.

Do not listen to useless talks,
but be diligent in studying the history of saints
and in the cultivation of sanctity.

Do not be a just man by words alone, but by doing also lest you should inherit a curse and be in want of a drop in the affliction.

Be satisfied with what you have, as a drink in the midst of fire. He who proffers water to the thirsty, the same is he who gives food **(12r)** to his friends.

Perform those things, which you are able to do,that you may be honored by the reward of justice for your life.

Keep the tranquility of the body and mind that you can subdue your emotions. Then the creatures will be at peace with you, and the wicked devils and the wicked men will tremble at you.

Do not keep way from the just man,
and do not be awed by a wicked rich man.

Be ashamed of and keep away from sin
that you may have confidence in your prayer.
Pray for your profit and not for your perdition.
Be diligent at every hour to please God
that his grace may help you at all times.

Prepare your mind wholeheartedly to please God that He will overshadow you with His mercy and will save you.

If you do not believe, do not pray.
If you do not pray, do not work.

Perform great things for perfection in secret,
and manifest little things for the glory of God.

Without learning, do not pray,
lest your labor should become vain.

Join perfection to your prayers,
so that light may be shining for your life.

Keep your body in purity and your soul in sanctity,
so that you may see in you the power of the Holy Spirit.

Love perfect modesty,
that you may be a mansion of the Holy Spirit.

Do not be idle and weak in the works of perfection,
lest your soul and body should become a nest of evil spirits.

Diligently control your emotions,
so that your passions may be subdued.

Fight against your body, that the devils may be subdued.

If you wish to be in peaceful tranquility,
flee from vainglory.

He, who loves his body, is oppressed in his soul,
but he does not think of it.

The victory of the devils is in wicked desires and honors.
And their defeat is in humble fasting and pure prayer.

If you are convinced of the difficulties of the warfare,
stand under protection.
This is sufficient for you, to save your soul.

Crown is reserved for victory
and there is always shame for failure.

Bend your body in humility,
lest the devil should bend you to his desire.

Pray secretly all the days of your life,
that you may be saintly all the days of your life.

Think of your sins for your victory,
and not of your holiness for your fall.
Look at him **(12v)** who is weaker than you, and not at
him who is stronger than you.

If there is a defect in one of your limbs,
look at him who has it in two of his limbs.

If you are in want of little things for your use,
be consoled by him who is entirely in want and thank God.

If you have confidence that God provides for you,
then you will not be afflicted in your need.
You will surely provide for your servant who is in need.

Evil things are around you,
do not forsake good things, and you will be victorious.

There are two powerful forces against you:
flesh and blood and evil spirits;
bodily labors subdue the one,
spiritual and bodily labors, the other.

If you have conquered, do not put away your arms.
If you are defeated, you will receive a fall.

Do not rebel against truth
and you will not make the fallen one victorious.
You shall not make him victorious by fall and by contention.

Do not love power and beauty.

Honor the superiors if they are of God.
Never be under those who are under sin.
Honor the just and flee from the wicked.

Be a servant in your freedom
and a free man in your slavery.

Be poor in your mind that you may profit in justice.
Keep justice that grace may shine in you.
Fear judgment and be strong in repentance.

If you have sinned in secret, repent in secret.
If you have sinned in pubic, accept the judgment in public.

And confess that you have sinned,
so that your wickedness may not increase.

If you are conquered while in debt,
God will subdue and reveal you.
If you are oppressed, rejoice in your happiness.

If you are persecuted, be strong in your hope.

Pacify your thoughts by the remembrance of the just judgment of God.Soon consolation will come to you in secret, and you will conquer your afflictions.

In short, all that is given to you by God, give the same to Him because of Him, and behold, you have become a free man, and will be peaceful in all your afflictions forever in the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

To Him and to His Father and to the Holy Spirit are praise, honor, thanksgiving and adoration, now and at all times forever and ever. Amen.

The first treatise ended.

The Second Treatise (Memra II) of the same St. Mar Babai the Great

(13r) A soldier is known from the arms and from his dress. And a man of God is known from the truth of his faith, and from the chasteness of his behavior.

The standard of the king is at the head of the array of the soldiers. And the standard of the Cross is at the head of all actions.

Satan put on the wicked serpent, which he sustained and directed and through it he spoke death.[7]

And God the Word, put on unitedly the sweet man, Jesus, whom he sustained and exalted and through him, He spoke life.

The wicked one, through the serpent, drove away the household of Adam from the Paradise of delight and made them dwell in the land of sorrows.[8]

And God the Word, through *His humanity,* gently made them return to Paradise and by His resurrection raises up to heaven all His adorers.

By the power, which conquers every thing, Satan was prohibited from entering into the serpent and speaking

---

7. Cf.Gen.3: 1ff.
8. Gen. 3:23f.

through it again. The serpent, by nature, is irrational, and Satan by his will is wicked and works corruption.

Christ is good in his humanity and good in his divinity.

He is the healer and He is the one who raises up the dead.

Satan did not constitute a union with the serpent, since the serpent is irrational and has no soul. From the *parsopa* of each other they did not speak. Serpent was only an irrational instrument.

But Christ in his humanity is a perfect man, intelligent and free in his properties and is good in his will; and he received unitedly everything of God the Word, through the *Parsopa of Filiation* forever.

You should not acquire
that which you cannot possess in the new world.

You should not give to others, that which is not yours.
And if you give to them,
inform the receivers whose gift it is,
so that you may not receive the reward of thieves.

At all hours think of the testament you made in the world.
And keep its obligations with all attention.

The one, who is dead to the world among the living,
does not return to the world.
And the salty sea receives the body without life. He who is dead in his intention, either he is with many, who are dead like him in the coffin or is alone.

(Fol.13v): Beware of thoughts, which raise up in you the world of mortals, so that they may not move you, and you

get out of your coffin, and the creatures that have no mercy may not eat your body. Understand the agreement and the covenant of the day, on which you left the world and saluted your friends because this is the door of the coffin for your rest.

Every one who resembles you is your brother, and he who does not resemble you is an accursed bastard.

If you are strong, walk with the weak without laziness. And if you are weak, walk with the strong; who are your companions of journey that carry with you your difficulties. Do not go about without provisions, lest your companions in journey may forsake you.

Love and honor those who travel with you,
And do not depart from them,
lest you should see them again and you have trouble.

At the sepulcher Mary saw our Lord, and joy and consolation filled her.[9] At the sepulcher angels were seen, and they imparted joy and taught the truth.[10] While the doors were closed on Sunday, the Apostles saw our Lord and were confirmed about the resurrection.[11]

The bones of Elisa gave life to the dead.[12]
Then live by the holy men who are dead to the world
and you will live for ever.

Go with the humble who does not seek you for his profit, lest he should fall, and if he is unwilling, do not entreat him, but convince him well and hold him direct by his hand.

---

9. John 20:14-18.
10. Mt 28:5-7;Mk 16:5-7;Lk 24:4-7; John 20:12-13.
11. John 20:19-23.
12. 2Kg 4:32-35.

Do not waste yourself with him
who does not give you profit.
Do not remain with him from whom you do not profit.

Be patient with him who has begun to be healthy.
And do not forsake him
who is of profit to you in our Lord.

Endure oppression, which profits you;
and flee from the rest, which ruins you.

If the children of darkness mock you, do not be sorry.
If they praise you, do not welcome it from them.

There is neither praise nor shame
from the dead for the living.
There is no one who learns a trade from a dead man.
There is no one who asks a blind man the way.
There is no penitent (**14r**) who asks the wicked and
blemished about ordered life.

If you ask a drunkard how you should fast,
he will laugh at you.
If you ask an immodest man how you should be sanctified,
he will despise you.

If the thought of an immodest man corrupts your mind and distracts your attention, how much more your company and mingling with him.

Turn your nose away from the stench from far.
Hasten and pass on, lest it should agitate your brain
and you may become sickly.

Know whether he who asks you is a good man
and then answer.

He who is not (good) and asks to do (something)
is a tempter to you like Satan.

Know that he, who twists your word without judgment,
is in the grip of vainglory and that is his thought.

Do not tempt a modest and holy man,
lest Satan should tempt you
and you fall into his judgment.

After your death from this life, leave only the remembrance of your virtues to your friends.
Do not be diligent to acquire that which cannot follow you to the new world. It is vain and empty work.

He, who praises the wicked and the evil one,
is the son of Satan and a hypocrite.

He who is blessed by holy men is a just one.
He who is praised by a spiritual man is wise.

Do not deal with a man, who is away from orderly men,
lest many should be scandalized by that.

It is God alone who knows the just and the children of the mysteries of His hidden domination.

Fools and those that have no discretion praise only the outward appearance, as a leper who is beautiful to the outward appearance by his clothes and dress.

The wise man praises the one who flees from honor and praise, and is humble in his thought and holy, and modest in his behavior, and exercises at all hours in spiritual learning and prayer.

Ask for temporal life, if you are repentant towards holy things. Ask for you a speedy death, if you cannot be holy.

Go to the dead, if you are near him without the others calling you.Forbid your leg from the house of feasting even if they press you much. Look at the dead from the cemetery and not from the house of celebrations and entertainments.

Be desirous to hear weeping and wailing,
And not the song (**14v**) and the joys of the world.

If you have not put on the shoes of the preparation of the Gospel, do not walk over thistles.[13]

If you do not hold in your hidden hand the sword of the Holy Spirit,[14] do not go over to fight.

Without the shield of faith,[15] do not go for discussions with the heretics and argue or dispute with them. Because their words strike as fiery arrows in their blasphemies and burns the simple.

Know the perverted from the inconsistency of his words, the lascivious from his lascivious laughter, and the mentally disturbed from the lightness of his emotions. And know the modest from the absence of emotions, the order of his words, and his peaceful appearance. Because he does not go out of himself.

If you have seen a woman of beautiful appearance and have swiftly turned your gaze to your friend who is near you and have seen him bending his look towards his leg, know, this one is truly a holy man and the preserver of modesty. If your look has been conquered and you have lasciviously

---

13. Eph 6:15
14. Eph 6:17
15. Eph 6:16

looked at the woman, know that there is still an enemy against you. Multiply your tears with laborious fasting and vigil during night. Know the cause of all the passions that fight against you and remove it from you. Do not walk without knowledge, lest your labors should be vain.

If you love praise,
you receive the burning arrows of fornication.
If you have loved vain glory,
prepare yourself for humble sorrow.

Do not raise up pride of mind, since it is of no use.
Do not find fault with a proud man,
lest he should mock at you.
Do not make promise to a lover of money,
lest he should despise you and detests you.

Do not put yourself into the sea without a ship. If the tempest that sinks (the ship) rises against you strongly, cry there to Jesus, (and) you will find help. A ship does not sail without a rudder,[16] nor is perfection attained without bodily labors and contrition of heart. At every hour, the eye of your heart must look at the Captain, and whatever he orders you, do it without delay and he will lead you swiftly to the harbor of life and you will see your city and will be in rest.

Without eyes and light, one does not see the objects. And without the purity of soul and the grace of the Holy Spirit, one does not acquire the spiritual discernment.

He who is blind and dark in mind **(15r)** does not acquire discernment, nor does he know that are outside and that are inside.

---

16. Jam 3:4

He that has not seen the Sun in its brightness, but has only learned of it by hearing, and has not felt its heat, nor its pleasant light, and makes his way laboriously and walks in it, does not see it, because he began his journey by a pleasant hearing and believed in it by its profit.

Do not travel without a friend, as far as possible.
If you have no guide,
do not throw away your stick in all your steps.
Stretch forth your stick first and then your leg.

Stop, if you have seen before you a pit or several obstacles: either sit or go back, and then, while you are on the way, pray earnestly to Him who created you, and he in his mercy will pity on you, namely, either he will send you a guide or will open your eyes that you may walk well.

There is no prayer that has come back in vain,
except that to which was not joined good behavior.

If you do not do that which you ask,
and if you know him not to whom you ask,
this one is dark and darkens you.

Do not laugh at the one you do not know,
lest the devil should laugh at you
and men should ridicule you.

Love the repentant one more than yourself.
And flee from a heretic more than from a murderer.

He who loves Christ, cannot love a heretic, nor can one who is of true faith be at peace with a heretic, who is corrupt in his thought.

Fast when you have bread. Be humble when you have authority. Endure mockery as much as you can. When women

are near you, be modest. (When you have no surplus, show mercy. But when there is, and you have power over them and you keep yourself away from them, you are doing well. Truly your reward is great, and wonderful is the reward of your labors. Otherwise your labor will be in vain and without profit, because it is not willingly that you keep yourself away and be a cenobite but because you do not find them and you have no power over them.

When others do not entreat you,
appear as merciful and as one who forgives.
Then you will be known that you are chaste and holy.

(15v): When you have limbs by which you can do evil, and there is no one to impede, perform virtue for perfection with all your limbs.

Let all your limbs and your actions be the cause for the glory of God. Let there not be for you a divided organ from the body of virtue, lest it should ruin and destroy all the other.

Do not think that every thought, that springs from you and is not radically joined in prayers and thanksgiving, is natural and virtuous. It is from Satan and from evil desires.

Go away from and avoid everyone that does not love you and honor you for God. Flee from and avoid the company and friendship of all those who do not wish to join you because of your ordered behavior. Let the one who flees from the company of heretics because of their heresy, be your friend unto holy things. If they hate you because of your truth and your spiritual fervor, rejoice greatly and praise God, because by this you will see in you his wonderful things and peace.

Rejoice in him who points out your shortcomings in charity, because this one is your true friend. He in whom by the

appearance of correction you see a mark of his hatred regarding his corrections, think that he is hateful and wicked.

If you want to know easily the one who is corrupt of mind, go with him and soon he will manifest himself without difficulty.

If you are in the midst of many and all are inclined and attracted to the same wickedness, keep yourself at once closed up, take refuge in silence and hasten and save your life, lest you should perish; then you will see their misery and temptations becoming powerful over them and you will praise the glorious Lord with a humble heart.

There is no one who is orthodox and his behavior wicked through his willfulness.
There is no heretic who cultivates virtue except in false appearance.

Every one who does not believe rightly and holds firmly all things that are written by the Spirit, is deprived of true hope and all his astuteness is entangled in wickedness.

If a heretic sees you firm in your faith and holding fast firmly to your truth, he will not keep company with you but will forsake you and will keep himself away **(16r)** from your company, wondering at your watchfulness. For if he sees you in doubts about truth, he will enter and dwell among your doubts and will make you his slave.

If a lascivious man sees in you chastity,
he will keep away from your friendship.

If you agree with error, it will honor you and praise you; if you flee from it, it will mock at you and oppress you. Imitate the blessed Joseph and you will inherit divine blessings and

honors.[17] Think of Canaan[18] and Ruben[19] in the two contemptuous passions of mockery and impurity, so that you may be saved from curse and shameful contempt.

Conquer the disputants by your silence, the oppressors by your patience, him who exults and overrides, by your humility, and him who mocks you, by honor and veneration. And then you will see and wonder how they have suddenly come to their senses.

He who desires and yearns to become a teacher
has not begun to learn.
He who longs to become head and the ruler of others,
has not yet controlled himself.

If your body fights against you,
take away from it its weapon and defeat it.

If your thoughts are dissipated, control them carefully by the weapon of the spirit, so that they may not be debilitated.

If impure passions become furious in you and passionately force for an outlet, shut the doors and control them, and they will be silent and be at rest.

If you control your sight,
you will easily conquer the passion of fornication.
If you keep your tongue orderly,
you will be freed from regret.
Remember not to get angry, for the sake of keeping your life and for the profit of many.

---

17. Gen 39:6-23
18. Gen 9:20-25
19. Gen 49:3-4

Dispute with yourself for your profit; be serene with those who fight with you; scold them according to your meekness; if you carefully act like this, you will be peaceful with yourself and with many who are of your mind. And you will acquire perfect love in Christ.

Be despicable and lowly before your eyes, so that you may be honored before God and be loved by his saints.

Love him who with charity corrects you for your shortcomings, more than him who praises you for your virtues.

Praise him whom you know will profit by praise,
so that he may become more diligent in virtues.

Do not correct him who is filled with contempt,
(16v) lest he should cause you harm.

If you have a friend who has fallen down through foolishness, correct him at the opportune time while you are in good terms with him.

If he listens to you, you have gained your brother.
If he does not listen to you, turn away your eyes from him, lest he should belittle you.

Do not drink with the heretic.
And do not eat bread with the corruptor and the perverted.

Do not make merry with the sinful man.
Do not speak if possible with the chatterer and the angry.

Dissolve your fast for the profit of others.
Be continent every day and fast for the preservation of your life.

If you are sick by reason of labors and food,
drink wine and eat cooked food.

If you are healthy in body and are working,
eat salty things and drink water.

Conduct your life according to your wisdom in all places where you are, lest you should be sickly and unable to work.

Think of the many
who are far from the ideal of your coenobitism.

Let there be for you one lay friend,of whom you have heard as praiseworthy from orderly men.Be careful, lest you should scandalize him and cause detriment to his ideal.

Beware of a wandering solitary and greedy poor man, lest he should draw you to his habits, and you will fall from your tranquility and from the practice of your coenobitism.

Do not work with a quick-tempered fool, lest he should deprive you of your serenity, which you have acquired by your labors.

He who loves and is prone to praise and special attention, is still bound by the yoke of Satan. Beware of him, lest by your praise he should draw you towards adulation and bind you in captivity.

He who hates correction towards just things
serves his passions.

Give without being impoverished
and keep away from him who does not profit.
Accept from him who profits by you,
but not out of greediness.
Keep away from him who does not give you,
but not out of wickedness.

He who loves many things, is deprived even of small things.

Rejoice in him who loves you because of God.
Do not speak with him who detests and hates you because of his pride. He who detests and condemns the holy man is entirely wicked.

He who honors and loves **(17r)** the saints
is a proved friend of God.
He who laughs at a poor man and at one, who is in trouble, will not see the morning star.
He who shuts his eyes to the needy, when he is able to console him, will not reach the mansion of the just.

If your companion is sick, visit and console him as much as you can. If your friend, a lay relative, is sick, pray for him and inquire about his health through others. If you hear about a sick woman, bury her in your thought and at once turn to your labor. This is profitable to you. Be at rest and do not think of her.

Dispel from your heart all those who are like these, and take care of the thought and love of God in it, and you will not fall unto your detriment.

Rejoice in the virtuous life of the holy man and in the preservation of his holy body. Praise God when the wicked man, who has done wickedness and harm to many dies, that he has stopped his evil doings and is taken away from causing trouble to others.

The holy man lives for his profit
and for the protection of many.
The wicked man lives for his detriment
and for the perdition of others.

If you have a companion and is your friend, but does not lead his life according to his promise, be sorry about him

at his death more than at his life. Beware of yourself, lest you also should imitate him for your perdition.

Take profit from the punishment of another,
lest you yourself should be punished,
fall away from your virtues,
and bring after you indebtedness in anger.

He who honors God and keeps His commandments,
is conscious of his hope and is aware of his profit.

He who with a hidden eye looks always at the Hidden One and places his hidden things before Him and his hope in Him, will not be shaken by any fear in his thought, because of the ideal that is set before him.

He who has "tasted and felt that the Lord is good", has captivated and thrown away from him all thoughts, and by this alone he is diligent to keep his commandments.

A gift, that is not because of God, has no thanksgiving for profitable reward.

He whose intention is this, namely, because of men and of the passing praise, serves the appearance of perfection.**(17v)** His hope is man. If nobody is watching him, there is no orderliness in him and he will work perversely.

He who, out of shame and fear and being mocked at, does not corrupt his body by fornication resembles a dog that is tied by a chain. If it happens that its tie is loosened, it will bite, destroy, bark and die in its perdition. So there is no praise to the headstrong dog, which is tied up, lest it should bite. And to this one, there is no wage or reward but only enmity.

As shadow follows the body, so reward follows the will. There is no shadow without body, nor are works taken into consideration without the will.

He whose will and his love is true,
is a proved martyr before God.

Some are afflicted because of their wickedness, and their limbs are stained in this life. Because of the faithlessness and calumny, they inherit eternal punishment. But there are those who, because of labors and willful hardships of diverse kinds of perfection, become sick and feel misery. And they do it intentionally, because they know their littleness. Such a person is a martyr in works and a confessor in thought, even in the absence of a judge and a tyrant king.

As much as you praise and glorify God in your difficult sickness and ask for patience, so much your soul gets health more and more and becomes bright and illumined, and you acquire hidden perfection in mercy.

If you have kept away from your spiritual behavior, and your body has become sickly, know that by the care of God and His love towards you, which is through the affliction of your body, and through your patience, you are making compensation for your shortcomings and negligence and from now on make a rule to yourself, and keep it firm and do not fall away from your promises, lest anything worse should happen to you than the first.

The sicknesses of the body are joined to the sicknesses of the soul, like the impure passions are joined to drunkenness and intoxication. As these are diminished and removed, the body also becomes healthy for its functions and its afflictions are also diminished.

Do not be unhappy about that which happens to you naturally in the limbs unto pain or by accident from without, because it will **(18r)** disappear and be over and has to rise up in resurrection and be renewed.

Be sorry greatly, and be in sorrow and tears when some sinful passion attacks your soul from your body, or by it your orderliness is destroyed.

If a rod of gold or silver is bent or made dirty by what happens to it, its maker can again put it into the furnace, and renew its first appearance, and it will acquire greater brightness.

So in your nature, if something beautiful or bright is seen or afterwards you have received it freely from God, do not glory about this, but beware more, lest the virtues of your will which you have acquired through long labors should disappear from you.

Every one who, always by reason of negligence and impatience, wanders and goes about from place to place, will meet evils and temptations that are more powerful than the first.

He who, in order to be praised in his place, and is tied up there in coenobitism, because of passing honors from the same place where he is held up, will inherit opprobrium, contempt, shame and mockery.

He who loves the passing honors of the world,
will have a passing reward and recompense.

The Babylonian subdued his vassal in Tyre and no reward was given him. He took his reward from Egypt,[20] the mother

---

20. Ezek.29:17-20;30:10;2Kg 24:7ff.

of wickedness. And because his hope was in the world, he was made equal to the beasts in his behavior.[21]

He who exchanges honors by contempt, and rest by labors for the sake of perfection, has already dawn upon him the hope and the delight of the world, which is full of happiness.

No one believes in hope,
except the one who walks in the Gospel.
No one walks in the way of Christ,
except the one who has learned it.

He who has occasion to get baptized and does not get baptized and has not received the Spirit in baptism, but is thought to be just, resembles the one who has not the form but is thought to be a man. He who has received baptism, but does not keep the commandments, resembles the one who is born but has no one to give him suckling. He who does not know what are said to be Christian books **(18v)** resembles the one who is born but has no eyes.

Just as the eye does not see without light,
so also a man does not know the truth without orderly life.
Just as a man does not walk without legs, so also a Christian cannot behave in virtue without being stabilized in Faith.
Just as he that is not born perfectly is not thought to be a man, so also every one that is not baptized in Christ, is not a Christian unto just things.
Just as the one who sows on the rock and his work is in vain, so also every one that gives possession lavishly but not for Christ, is deprived of recompense.
He that fasts and mortifies himself, but not with the intention of perfection, resembles the adulteress who is clad in garments of modesty.

---

21. Dan 5:31-33

He who doubts about the doctrines of Christ in his thought, resembles the one who doubts about him whether there is soul in him.

He who trembles always at sin, is living in God.
He who does not feel sorry for his wickedness, is truly dead.
He who boldly resolves that he will not sin
is truly a reasonable man.
He who keeps silence about truth is dumb to truth.
He who cultivates impure things is short of stature,
and is kept for affliction.
The angels love him who performs virtues
and his truth is precious over him.

Death and corruption follows the carnal one. But life without sorrow and blessings follow the spiritual one.

He who adheres to his wife becomes one flesh with her,
and if the flesh of one of them is corrupted,
the love of both also is corrupted.

He who adheres to Christ with sincere love
becomes one spirit with Him forever.
Corruption never adheres to the Spirit;
sin never adheres to the friend of Christ.

The behavior of the believer is ordained for reward.
He who does not believe in the resurrection
is an animal in his behavior.

Conception perfected in its order moves towards birth. And he who is perfected in love is moved in knowledge. The embryo when it is perfected cannot be held up in the womb of the mother, nor the knowledge of the spiritual man could be hidden, and it cannot but come out in deed. As the child is one with its mother, although **(19r)** it was born with

difficulty, so knowledge is united to the one who acquires it, although it was acquired by long labor. He who is from lawful marriage makes the parents happy. And he (who is not),[22] confounds his mother.

Thus the teaching of Christ, to which works are joined, makes its teacher happy and it pleases also the disciples. But if the teaching is heretical, it confounds the teachers and puts the disciples to shame.

The parents rejoice when their children resemble them. And they take care of them and gather riches for them. The spiritual teachers rejoice when their disciples imitate their footsteps, and they take care of their perfection and gather for them the treasure of life, which do not pass away.

No one receives learning from one who is foreign to any trade. And you should not receive counsel from any one who is not of your behavior. You should not learn anything from the proud, and receive alms from the one who boasts.

The conclusion of all conclusions:

Purify your thought and sanctify your body.
Believe rightly and speak the truth.
Be diligent during all your days in the spiritual learning.
And behold you will become the friend of God.
And He will make in you His dwelling, as he knows.

He who always looks at God and whose thought is full of His memory and keeps His commandments according to his strength with humility does not fall from the right intention in which he directs his life.

The Second Treatise ended.

---

22. a word is missing. The words in the bracket are inserted.

The Third Treatise(Memra III) of the same Mar Babai

The diligent soldier who loves his master and is careful with himself, never throws from him his arms in the field of his enemies.

The strong soldier of Christ does not put away from him the strong arms of the commandment of his Lord in the place where Satan and sin fight.

Therefore if you have put away from you your arms and have slept and your enemy feeling it, has hastened and jumped against you and made you fall under him, then make your voice heard at all hours through praises and spiritual meditation, so that your enemy may know that you are vigilant against him.

When there is no war against you,
be more careful and watchful.
Thieves are more**(19v)** vigilant and careful during the night,
and wild beasts lie in ambush inside the den during the day.

During all the hours and times look at your intention.

Do not live with a disputer,
and do not work with one who kills the purpose.
Do not dine with the greedy,
and do not keep vigil with one who loves sleep.

Prepare your soul greatly, and be vigilant in prayer,
when temptation is not near.

Fire does not remain with water,
and chastity does not remain in the midst of women.

The dog does not know shame.
And the adulteress and the daring woman do not feel shame.

The thief is not a hypocrite regarding his wickedness
when he is hungry.
And to the adulteress,
lasciviousness and continence are the same.

Pearl is tarnished by fire.
And virginity in the company of women.

Love and chastity emulate each other.
And by their perfection they magnify each other.

Easy is the perdition of a sheep that feeds alone.
And swift is the fall of a solitary
who lives alone near villages.

If you do not know swimming,
do not plunge yourself into the deep.
If you have not learned the arts and the wisdom of chastity,
do not speak with women.

Do not look straight to the brightness in the shining of the Sun.Do not prolong your look at the beauty of an adorned woman.

The burning charcoal causes burns from all sides.
And a beautiful and lascivious woman manifests passion from all her limbs.

If a serpent licks your hand, do not allow it to be there.
And if a woman approaches and kisses your hand,
beware of her as a corrupt one.

As many are the modes and labors of an art,
which is more perfect than another,
so many are the labors of Christian life.
Wisdom and art are useful to it.

There is a limit to each of the crafts, since it serves only time, but there is no limit or boundary to the learning of Christian life, because it remains forever. He who learns temporary art, the more he prolongs himself in it, the more he feels by experience that it is beautiful.

He who applies himself to learn the wisdom of the new world, the more he labors **(20r)** and prolongs his learning, the more he knows that he does not know; that is, a little of the much; but this too is insignificant.

He who has been proved in war by several of the worldly activities, knows in himself that he is strong and is convinced of the difficulties and fights well.

The soldier of Christ, how much so ever he fights and learns the modes of fighting, is convinced in his mind, and he is right that he has no wisdom and strength, not even over little things without grace.

He who always wanders from place to place in the sea, is not conversant with the art of war. And the one who always wanders in the streets of towns and villages, is not conversant with the strategies of the wicked devils and hidden battles.

He who does not always practice his art, deflects from it. Knowledge departs from him who does not take pains all the days of his life in prayer and the rest of the spiritual exercises, and his hope vanishes and his intellect gets dark.

Never learn any art which is not profitable to the future world, because it is not lasting.

How much the art is to be estimable,
so much its teacher is esteemed.
No one can teach an art by words alone,
but must be accompanied by practice.

Learn well the behavior of your teacher,
and then entrust yourself to him.

As the roots of a plant, which is watered with salty water, are dried up and its fruits perish, so do those who hear the corrupt teaching from the heretic. Even their natural orderliness they possess, is lost from them and they are deprived of true life.

It is easier for a wicked teacher to corrupt the disciples, than cancer to affect the bones.

Every teacher who does not teach orderly behavior,
together with the truth of his belief, is a corrupting wolf.
Beware of him.

The shepherd does not go in peace with wolves.
Nor does the cenobite plot with a heretic.

He who loves orderly people is orderly.
There is none more wickedly
than the one who takes salt with wicked men.

He who despises God is more wicked than pagan.
The pagan adores the magician without **(20v)** discerning.
The pagan, whom his scrutiny troubles him,
believes in his affliction.

And the Christian whom his faith vivifies,
doubts about his loss.

Who has ever seen the changing of the words.
The wise of the world and the wicked have taught and written:
"The inanimate elements are intelligent and immortal".

The vexed Egypt and the whole of Mesopotamia made the Immortal mortal, the Invisible sensible, the Infinite finite, the unchangeable, flesh, bones and limbs, and the Spirit, Life and Light, they crucify every day in their humanity.

Glory to you our Lord, glory to you who in our humanity taught us life.And the living loved death.

In the assumption of our first-born you manifested your brightness. And the wicked heretics loved darkness.

Flee from the midst of decay.
Do not mix with those who make God suffer.
Keep company with wolves
rather than with the crucifiers of the Creator.

Do not ask the blind man about the way,
or a heretic about truth.

If you have tasted in you the sweetness of sanctity,
do not go to the crowds.
Put your trust in a faithful lay man
and remain in your silence.

For the weakness of beasts are given cliffs for protection. And you, who are weak, save yourself in the mountain, so that your status that has salt, may not become fruitless.

In Midian Israel has offered to Baal-Peor; and the son of Israel was killed because of Cozbi.[23] And at the top of the mountain, Moses saw God in a vision and received knowledge.[24] At the top of Carmel, Elijah made fire come down upon the children of Satan.[25] And an angel fed him, who fled from the adulterous Jezebel to the wilderness.[26] And he was made worthy for great things on the top of mountain and he received revelations.[27] And from the wilderness he was taken up to the height of heaven and he enlightened the spiritual ones.[28]

And in the wilderness Christ upset Satan and drove him back and in the wilderness he multiplied bread. In the wilderness an angel strengthened him and the angels ministered unto him. And he formed for us an example and taught us personally.[29]

It is not in the midst of women and in the streets of town that the earthly soldiers exhibit their glorious deeds, but in the wilderness and in the array of battle. So do all the saints who are the soldiers of Christ. Being armed for battle, they went out **(21r)** to the wilderness and upset Satan and all his strength.

As the life of a man who is withheld from air for some time in space perishes, so he who empties his mind from spiritual meditation and exercises of perfection, easily perishes in sin.

---

23. Num 25:1-9. 14-15
24. Ex 3:1ff.
25. 1 Kg 18:20ff.
26. 1 Kg 19: 4 -8
27. 1 Kg 19:9ff.
28. 2 Kg 2:11
29. Mt 4:1ff.; Mk 1:12-13;Lk 4:1-13;John 6:1ff.;Mt 14:13-21; Mk 6:32-44; Lk 9:10-17.22:43.

He who is conscious of his perfection without thinking that he is in the midst of agitation, only looks at himself and is careful in his hidden protection that he may not perish.

As the constant flow of drops of water perforates the rock, so the constant and willful company with the wicked alienates the soul from its truth.

He, who is well confirmed in the love of God,
is like a rock in the midst of the sea.
For he does not suffer harm,
even if wicked things greatly flow over him.

Those who are firm in faith are never conquered by the wicked powers, just as Elijah, Obadiah and the fifty and twenty thousand were not killed by the order of the wicked Ahab and the adulterous Jezebel.[30]

The slavery of the barbarian does not cause harm to the lovers of God, as the captivity of the Babylonian did not hurt Daniel, and those of the household of Ananias, nor were they changed from their true purpose.[31]

A wicked man does not embarrass the holy man who is pleasing to God, even if he destroys all his limbs and feelings, just as the wicked and the perverted do not profit from being always near the good, while the wickedness of their will is already fixed. For, the discipleship of Gehazi did not profit him anything from the poverty and sanctity of the prophet Elisa,[32] or Judas did not profit anything from our Lord by all those wonderful deeds. Because of his intrigues,

---

30. 1 Kg 18:3-4; 1 Kg 19:1ff.
31. Dan 6:16-22;3:1ff.
32. 2 Kg 5:1ff.

Judas was deprived of the little which he possessed, in the false appearance of discipleship, as he (wished to) possess much more than what he had in the beginning, and so he was consumed by the desire of money, as not to have consideration even for his master in selling him.[33]

In this way, in our wicked generation, many perverting men are deprived of the little things which they possess, and through the false appearance of sanctity they become rich in error and gather and possess much wealth , so as not to have consideration even for the truth of their faith, which they give up by reason of honor and money.

Many are the offspring **(21v)** of scorpion....[34]
And not according to the perverse thought of their wicked design.

An adulteress does not always remain with one.
He, whose thought has been corrupted once,
does not remain in the One....[35]

Wicked is the head of the serpent.
And more than that is the appearance of wicked design.

There is no friendship for a wolf with the sheep;
nor charity with the Jew for the church.
Darkness does not mix with light;
nor do the lovers of the world
agree with the lovers of Christ.
There is no agreement for the serpent with the dove.
Nor agreement for the heretic with the orthodox.

---

33. Mt 26:14-16;Mk 14:10-11;Lk 22:3-6

34. missing in the text

35. missing in the text

Viper is wicked;
but not like the deceiving and adulterous woman.

When a child is born, it does not look at its mother.
And the holy man of God, who has acquired chastity with labor, does not look at a woman....[36]

A newly born child begins to cry with the breathing of air. And a man when he mysteriously goes out by means of a new birth of repentance from the depth of impurities, and has breathed by it the pledge of the life of the new world and has remembered that the impurity in which he was immersed by lascivious behavior, begins with a cry. And the child as it grows stops from crying.

Ask carefully those who have fallen and have come back, about the way in which you wish to travel, namely, because of what, and when you have learned about its difficulty; either be courageous and praise him or if you doubt about your orthodoxy and are in fear and tremble, do not go out, lest you should be in contempt and laughter and suffer as a debtor and be thought of as a denier without hope.

When one has not hired himself as a laborer, he has no debt, as he sits in his house and takes rest.

He, who has dedicated himself to military service, goes out willingly to battle. But when he hears the rumor of battle there, if he turns and runs away, his punishment will be merciless.

Those who have denied their first faith
have their testament ready.

---

36. missing in the text

Because of the pleasures of the worldly things
they are torn away from Christ.

Water that falls from above turns the axis of the grinding stone. He who binds himself to the works of virtue receives help from above.

If an ox is loosened from its yoke, it runs towards food. And if the mind is loosened from the cultivation of virtues, it gives itself up to rest and passion.

The iron, which is fixed on the axis of the grinding stone, is fixed on iron and then **(22r)** sparkles.
And right mind is fixed on the truth of faith
and thus it begins the divine service.

As the cock does not miss the time at which it always crows during night, the man of God does not miss the time of midnight, at which he is accustomed to rise up and pray and praise God with heartfelt praises.

At midnight the bonds of the household of Peter were loosened and light shone on them.[37]

On all the days of your life, when you get up from your sleep, think in this way that you have begun the service of the whole of the day and have hired yourself and when you will be consoled by the Lord with whom you work, namely, what your wages are, and to whom he gives it, and when the evening comes, see your labors and demand your wages. If your labor is not equal even to your bread, be silent and ask pardon, because on all your days you must thus be found a debtor and should not be proud.

---

37. Acts 12:6-15

Be vigilant during the night, and pray and beseech as if you will enter the next day the place of judgment and you will be demanded of every thing you are in debt. If you are not able to pay, they will beat you and will demand of you a pledge and when will you be able to repay?

In all the afflictions and difficulties which meet you in this way of perfection, which is for the love of Christ, think that the soldiers beat you by the command of a tyrannical king and by that of the cruel officials, and be patient, and ask for help and think of the crowns which are kept for the holy martyrs, that you may become an heir with them, and your fasting and coenobitic life be for the subduing of the passions alone, that your soul may find rest and may be made worthy of reward.

If you accustom yourself with vigils of night and prayers, you will acquire sanctity.
If you bend your waist at all hours,
your mind will be humbled.

Beat your head always with heartfelt prayers before the sign of the cross, so that the devils may wail and go far away from the flames, which you have kindled against them.

Be constant in the service of Psalms, so that the bright love of Christ may burn in you, And your behavior may always be filled with consolation and joy of heart.

Be diligent in the reading of holy books, and in the teaching of the blessed Fathers, (22v) so that you may be confirmed in your hope, walk well, conquer negligence, know the truth, grow in the knowledge of Christ
and concentrate in your mind.

Be despised and contemptible to the present world, so that the pledge of the mysteries of the future world may be revealed in you.

Do not doubt about justice so that remissness may not reign over you, and you be deprived of grace both in your person, and in this life: You will learn about that perfect judgment in the justice of God as a pledge.

To Him is honor forever. Amen.

The Third Treatise ended.

The Fourth Treatise (Memra IV) of the same blessed Mar Babai

See what is profitable to you at this time for the life to come, and be diligent to acquire it soon and do not make delay. Examine every day in which things you are wanting and found deficient.

Be diligent with all your strength to acquire it uprightly, and do not neglect little and insignificant shortcomings, lest you should be caught in bigger ones and be made to fall.

Do not trust in your wisdom and in your strength,
because through your fall you will know
your weakness and your faults.

As it is not possible that without danger the Captain can reach the harbor, so he who walks in the way of Christ cannot be without danger, until the day of his passing away from this agitated life.

If you burn your body with afflictions of labor and battles, strengthen it and give it rest under the shade of the Most High, and direct your weapon against your enemy from all sides.

When you have rested a little and have been strengthened, rise up and prepare for the battle.

If you have not labored much, do not take rest,
lest you should be praised by those of your co-workers,

and be far away from victory and be deprived of the crown by shame.

If you are set free from the battle by mercy, always take up your stick, carry your valet, and bind your loins with readiness, that you may not be late, and negligent to think of your death.

If love of the world is roused in you, ask about the first ones and scrutinize the middle ones, if there were among them rich **(23r)** or wise or prophetical or beautiful people, or those who were honored or feared. See where they are now and what happened to them. And if they have become as they were not, how do you desire to become like them, and to inherit the afflictions in the everlasting life. Therefore turn away your look as from darkness towards light.

Remember the first saints, the middle prophets and the blessed Apostles. See what they did and how they preserved their wealth, the everlasting happiness kept for them, that it might not be plundered, their beauty tarnished, their wisdom perished, and their remembrance wiped out. And they were encouraged and strengthened by that and they did not doubt. Now you may put yourself in their footsteps as an inheritor.

Think that there is a day in your life, which is in this world, so that you may not become negligent, for, the time of your passing away is hidden so that you may not get remiss in your true life, and may not perish by your negligence.

In this world rest is not given to you, so that you may not think that you work with ease in it, and be deprived of the happiness, which ages do not cause to pass away.

Love Christ in all your present and future life, so that you may not be attached too much to any one of his creatures, and may not be counted in the number of the hypocrites.

If you have seen rich men enjoying, wicked ones prospering and evil ones honored, understand that this alone is their hope. They will not be able to open their mouth in the judgment of justice. They are now deprived of all these, with which they have committed wickedness and evil and sinned and corrupted and stained. Understand that delight and rest are found with hope. In this world, the wicked ones prosper, and afflictions, difficulties, troubles, torments, and humiliations are for those who walk straightly in the narrow path of Christ; and to you there is affliction.

Do not dwell with one, who is inclined towards honors and praises, lest **(23v)** he should subjugate you to his passions, or he should become a perfect hater by his hatred unto you.

If any one is a teacher in his words, and his deeds are found lascivious, see that you may not become his disciple, lest you also should become similar to his deeds, and his words become useless to you.

Just as the silk garments of the king are dirty for the covering of pigs, so are the teachings of the divine words dirty to the proud and the impure.

Just as cutting of a ploughshare behind the oxen does not take place in a rock, so are the corrections of wise men not received in the heart of someone, who is proud and haughty in his thought.

Just as the seed is destroyed and perishes inside a furnace burning with fire, so are the divine words destroyed in the hearing of someone, who is haughty and wicked in spirit.

Just as Absinthium[38] is bitter and abhorrent to an abnormal mind, so is the hearing of the praises of the holy bitter to the envious.

There are trees that are on the riversides and they always absorb water, but do not produce fruits.

There are those who by natural discernment, which they have cultivated do justice and are drawn towards knowledge; and there are those who learn every day virtues and the knowledge of sanctity, but every day sin and fall into hideous things.

The bird Ukbara does not remain in water,
and sin does not remain with repentance.

Dry wind destroys the fruits,
and the love of praise destroys the virtues.

Easy is the destruction of a garden that has no fence.
And a man who does not control his mouth and stomach is destitute of all virtues.

As a crown on the head of a monkey is hideous,
power or honor is hideous to a fool.

Rust corrupts the iron that is buried in the moist earth.
And the heart of man, which is buried in earthly things, is corrupted by them.

A holy man does not despise any one,
except the one who does not repent of his wickedness.

A dead man does not love or praise,
except the one who resembles him.

---

38. A bitter medicine

A serpent moves alone, and a deceiver, whose ways are wicked, has nobody who knows his secret.

There is no agreement for the wolf to the sheep.
And there is no mingling for the wicked
(24r) with the holy man.

If you are in need, do not be silent,
and if you are not in need, do not speak.

A man, corrupt and divided in mind, is agitated
against an upright man more than against a leper.

Flee from a reviler more than from a venomous snake. And be away from a wicked teacher more than from a Basilisk.

Beware of a talkative disputer more than of a mad dog.

Do not place a scorpion in your bosom,
and do not join with a wicked man.

A greedy rich man is a devouring pit.

To a lover of praise exaltation is more pleasing
than an only son.

The feet of the wicked is always towards the place of judgment rather than towards the Church of God.

As the sharpness of thorns is destroyed in the flames of fire, so sins are wiped out by mercy and forgiveness.

Always do good to those from whom you have no hope of being rewarded nor of being praised by others.

Flee from constant honors more than from daily plunderers. Beware of a reviler more than of a serpent that kills.

Flee from a deceiver more than from a murderer.
Let not an oppressing rich man nor a rapacious lion love you.
Be afflicted with hunger.
But do not eat with a greedy glutton.
Be a beggar with beggars. But do not receive alms from a lover of praise.

Sit in the midst of lepers and the miserable,
but not in the midst of mockers and adulterers.

Rejoice when your right hand is extended to almsgiving for Jesus' sake. Curse yourself and go away from there.

If signs and wonders were worked by your hands, take care of your humility, lest it should be thought that these were done by you. The traitor Judas worked wonders. But he inherited hanging.[39]

The mighty Samson killed a lion. But a woman killed him.[40]

Think yourself a well without water and full of hard rock, So that living waters may flow out from you[41] and you may confound the wicked.

If because of your meekness, God worked and spoke in you wonderful things, it is for the defeat of the proud and for His glory, as he knows.

Be as a lamb in your simplicity of good things, and be as a wild ass to shake away from your neck the yoke of sin.

---

39. Mt 27:5
40. Judges 14:5-6; 16:4ff.
41. John 4:14

If they blackmail **(24v)** you while you do not think of it, do not stand against it for the profit of many, lest God should be against you.

Think of him, who through leisure and honors induces you to break your spiritual law and to corrupt the orderliness of your coenobitism, as a perfect hater and an organ of Satan.

Beware of him who steals your furniture,
lest he should steal you also.

As the apple of the eye is hurt if the finger rubs over it always, so is the soul hurt if it is constantly praised.

As dirt adheres to pigs, so impurity adheres to intoxication and drunkenness.

As the poison of the venomous serpent is deadly,
so the doctrine of the heretics corrupts its hearers.
Hold the air by your palms,
rather than money from an astrologer.
Be pleased with the pain of the sting of a scorpion,
rather than with the fortune telling from stars.

As despised and vile is bread which is sprinkled with dung, so despised and vile is the teaching about orderly behavior, when error of heresy and the teaching of devils are mixed with it.

As wine is corrupted with bitter water,
so orthodox teaching is corrupted by hideous behavior.

He, who is beaten by the devils, is agitated in his mind.
He, who has received the teaching that is against truth,
is agitated in his soul and is confused in his behavior.

The humility of a holy man is proved by mockery and contempt, and the freedom of the orderliness of a just man is scrutinized by power.

He who is humble of mind and modest,
has his emotions calm and his thoughts quiet.
And he who loves praise has no peace.

He who retaliates mockery is devoid of good behavior.
He who does not forgive the plunderer
does not confirm divine judgment.
He whose actions are impure
does not believe in the resurrection.
He who leads his life by tricks and cunningness
doubts about God.
He who does not believe in judgment is known by his works.
The wise and the modest in the midst of the gathering of many is like the soul inside the body.
The wicked that is silent is a bitter serpent.

The thought **(25r)** of a deceiver is a poisonous viper.
A deep pit: he who always sins and is always justified.
Honey from bitter things is like repentance with laughter.
A friend who corrects in secret is a wise physician.

He whose wound wine and oil did not heal,
operation and burning will cure,
lest the whole of his body should be subject to decay.

The sorrows of the world in the heart are like the grub in the wood. But the sorrow because of repentance for sins is life, peace and consolation.

An angry potentate is a destroying lion.
A deceiving disciple is an accursed betrayer.

Company with young people is the way of all scandals.
Keeping away from small virtues leads towards a great fall.
He who is conquered by vile things cannot be strong
in front of great things.
Do not offer up your prayers negligently,
lest you should be shaken and weakened on the earth.

Beware of drunkenness from wine, lest you should become what you are not and you fall into the pit of mud. The holy Noah was found between two floods of two deaths, and his nakedness was not revealed. But by the drinking of wine his nakedness was revealed, and his honor was tarnished.[42]

In the midst of unchaste people of the Sodomites, the just man Lot kept the observance of the law and was not contaminated. And in the place without danger, wine in drunkenness perverted his mind and through an abominable and unlawful intercourse stained both of his daughters and his seed was repudiated.[43] "The Amorites and the Moabites shall not enter the congregation of the Lord till the seventh generation".[44]

The strong Samson split up the cub of a lion. But the Philistine woman overthrew him and took away from him the crown of his Nazarineness, and he fell in the hand of the uncircumcised and they blinded him and put him in prison. He turned the grinding stone.[45]

As a mighty man David made the Philistine fall and put him in the pains of death. But the beauty of Beth Sheba made

---

42. Gen 6:9;9:20-22
43. Gen 19:1ff. 30-38
44. This sentence is repeated in the ms.
45. Judges 14:5-6; 16:4ff.

him fall into sin, and he was made to fall by the daughter of the Philistines and became an opprobrium. Lion and bear did not stand against him **(25v)** but sight killed him and desire made him fall.[46]

The jealousy of Joseph's brothers threw him into a pit. Money saved him from there and he lived. And because he did not listen to the impure wife of Potipher, she put him in irons. But he became glorious because of his chastity and became the minister in Egypt.[47]

The desire of the body, which is not bridled from childhood through humility and chastity, remains with liars, with its impurity up to old age, and shameless old and elderly men bear testimony that they became old with their wickedness. Because they desired the beauty of the holy Susanna, they became an opprobrium and their life perished.[48]

Cry as Susanna and flee as Joseph,[49]
so that you may become more glorious than the glorious ones.

Sanctity and virginity gave life to the dead
and worked wonders.
But impurity and lasciviousness ruined many
and worked ruin.

If you wish to reign over your passions, and to conquer those who hate you and to acquire peace in you, think of yourself as a flee and a dog in the humility of your mind and you will be strong and diligent in all your works.

---

46. 1 Sam 17:50-52; 2 Sam 11:2; 1Sam 17:34-37
47. Gen 37:3-28; 39:6-20; 41:1ff.
48. Dan 13:1ff.
49. Dan 13: 24;Gen 39:12

Put on the fervor that is against all wickedness,
that you may be wrapped up to the height
by your watchfulness.

Acquire purity of heart in prayer,
that you may defeat your enemies in their hallucinations
and become terrible over them.

Imitate the shepherd and not the shop keeper.
Walk with begging legs, and not on horses
as the riders of horses.

Scrutinize well the lambs,
and do not put your eyes on the rams.
If possible do not look at pigs.
And when it meets you, beware of its dirt.
Do not stay where there are fox and dog together.
Prepare for you your dwelling
where there dwell stags, hares and rabbits,
and dwell in it until the end of your life.
Take care of yourself of envy
against the saints and the elect of God,
lest like Saul you should kill yourself by your sword.[50]

Do not imitate the pompous Babylonian,
and do not love honor above your limit,
lest you should be deprived of your honor,
and detested by your friends.

If you desire to be an elect, be an example in humility.

Acquire diligence with sigh, without shyness, with heartfelt repentance like **(26v)** the sinful woman, that you may receive

---

50. 1 Sam 31:4

the forgiveness for the greatness of your love, "because you love much and by it you may receive in you confidence of hope," namely, "your faith has vivified you; go in peace".[51]

He who has felt his weakness and keeps himself away from sin, never rests from prayer and watchfulness, lest his labors should perish.

Beware of detraction in your thought, lies in your words and sin in your actions, and never assert yourself because words without works are vain, and there are no works without a pure conscience of thought.

He who has found in his soul consolation in secret,
no wickedness shakes him away
from the thought of God and from prayer.
This one always tramples under foot and passes over all fears
through the help which accompanies him.

Treasure that is gathered with labor is kept
by watchfulness and vigilance.
Through many days a seed grows and gets fat.
But at the time of the harvest if a little spark burns it,
it becomes, as it was not.

Worse are the sorrows and misery of a destroyer,
than the afflictions and distress of sons.
More bitter is the sorrow of her soul who buried her only begotten, than of a sterile woman who has no child.
If you suffer labors and willful afflictions, with a clean heart,
You will find consolation and rest and joy of heart.

---

51. Lk 7:36-38.50

When you are engaged in the careful recitation of Psalms and your soul burns with joy or when you read the Scriptures your mind rejoices in the delight of the words of the Spirit, then take courage and thank the Lord, because you have begun to enter the peaceful harbor of forgiveness through mercy.

When you are fasting, and are in diligent continence, and your body is subdued, if you see yourself as one in a deep pit, and the passing things are despicable in your eyes, know that your repentance has begun to give fruits in your monastic life.

If calamities suddenly fall on you and your soul is recollected within, and your feelings are concentrated and all the emotions of your body have rested in silence, and your heart is raised up and is enlarged, and the spiritual brightness has shown in you, then take courage, rejoice, be watchful and acknowledge the abundant mercies, because you have received in you the pledge for the coming happiness which gives joy in the new world to those who loved Christ and kept his commandments.

And finally if you have remained in silence with the intention of perfection and if the whole of the empty thought of this world is not in your mind, then you are conquering negligence and are freed from sin, and have made the tyrannical devil fall, and are the mansion of the Holy Spirit who works in you, and enlightens your mind in all things which are profitable to your true life in Jesus Christ our hope and our God.

To Him and to His Father and to the Holy Spirit, praise, exaltation, thanksgiving and adoration forever and ever. Amen.

Useful Counsels by Mar Babai are ended.